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## Resist Newsletter, Aug-Sept 1990

Resist

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# RESIST

Newsletter #228

*A Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority*

August/September, 1990

## Grassroots Report

# Creating a New Foreign Policy: Cambridge-Ramallah/El-Bireh Sister City Campaign

NORA LESTOR

*I* t was hot and the luggage I was carrying made my back ache. I stood on the Bir Zeit road in the West Bank City of Ramallah, unable to reach my friend's house on the other side of the main square. The square had been declared a Closed Military Area and Israeli soldiers prevented anyone from walking through. So I asked a taxi driver (in Arabic) how to reach my destination on the back road. He eyed me suspiciously and asked, "Aren't you from around here?" "No," I said, "I'm American." He turned away angrily and blurted out, "Well then, it's your own fault that the square is closed!"

That conversation took place as I travelled in the Occupied Territories to lay the groundwork for the first ever U.S.-Palestine sister city relationship. As coordinator of the Cambridge-Ramallah/El-Bireh Sister City Campaign, I have had hundreds of conversations and meetings with Palestinians. Some were brief; most have been warm and enduring. All of them have taught me that I cannot escape the role I play in the Middle East. Whether I actively work for peace, or whether I do nothing and thereby passively support the unjust status quo — *I am involved.*

I recognize the powerful role the U.S. government plays in the Middle East, and

I am troubled that U.S. policy is neither balanced nor likely to lead to peace. The U.S. government and the U.S. people do not seem to recognize that justice for Palestinians is an essential first step in the peace process. Only when Palestinians and Israelis both enjoy their rights to self-determination, security and dignity can there be progress toward a real, comprehensive Middle East peace. But once peace with justice is achieved, Palestinians, Israelis, and all peoples of the Middle East and the world will benefit.

Developing meaningful relationships with Palestinians has deepened my personal commitment to Middle East activism. My friends give me inspiration, strength and a sense of personal involvement. Making Middle East peace a personal issue is the goal that underlies all the work of the Cambridge-Ramallah/El-Bireh Sister City Campaign.

The Sister City Campaign grew out of the work of the Campaign for Peace with Justice in the Middle East, a Boston area coalition of peace groups. One impetus for the project was the attention focused on Palestinians as a result of media coverage of the Intifada. There was an urgent need for a Middle East project that could provide alternative perspectives that would be broad and inclusive; and yet would not compromise its political relevance. The Sister City Campaign became a reality in March, 1989, when it hired a part-time staff person and became an independent entity.

## Middle East Peace Work is Hard

For many reasons, people in this country feel disempowered and disconnected from Middle East work. Some may feel that the Middle East is too far away to affect them; that the Arab-Israeli conflict is too complicated; or that the conflict is age-old and unresolvable. Some people subscribe to common stereotypes of Palestinians as untrustworthy, terrorists, or religious extremists. Others are afraid of being labeled "anti-Semitic." For the U.S. peace movement, Central America and Southern Africa remain the "hot" issues, while the Middle East is considered "too hot."

However, peace activists should know that "not getting involved" is impossible. If we pay taxes we are already involved through the billions of U.S. tax dollars sent annually to the Middle East in foreign aid, at the expense of domestic needs in the areas of housing, education and health care. We are already involved as victims of the nuclear and conventional arms race, which threatens to escalate into world tragedy. If we ignore the Middle East, we allow our government a free hand to make and implement policies which may not be in anyone's best interest.

The Sister City Campaign is an organizing strategy that seeks to undo the "avoidance syndrome" that impedes involvement with Palestinians and the Middle East. We make the issues local by creating a direct city-to-city and people-to-

*continued on page two*



people relationship. We do not impose a political agenda on the community, but instead function as a community resource, providing education and programming to involve people with a range of interests — humanitarian, cultural, political, economic or religious. Most importantly, instead of investing all our efforts protesting U.S. government policy or reacting to events in the Middle East, we have initiated our own foreign policy, a pro-active policy based on our respect for Palestinian human and national rights, and our commitment to justice and peace in the Middle East. When people become involved with the Campaign, they become involved in actually redefining the U.S. - Palestine relationship.



Palestinian girl at an orphanage in Ramallah, performs for her U.S. guests.  
Photo: Nora Lestor.

## The Challenge

I recently mentioned to an acquaintance that I work to promote a more human image of Palestinians. When I said the word "Palestinian," she shuddered. To her, and to many others, "Palestinian" and "Palestine" mean violence and war. The equation of Palestinian with terrorist is not coincidental. It is perpetuated through TV shows and movies and through government statements and policies. Anti-Arab racism distorts clear thinking about

Palestinian rights to security, dignity, safety and statehood; people who are not perceived as fully human are not considered worthy of human rights.

Moreover, there is a pervasive myth that Palestinian and Israeli rights are mutually exclusive. Well-intentioned people hesitate to support the former, fearing that Palestinian gains would automatically and directly reduce Israeli security. Efforts like ours, which are clearly pro-Palestinian, become erroneously labeled "anti-Israel." I can't count the number of times I've told someone I work for Middle East peace, only to have them ask "Oh, and which side are you on?" When I answer, "Both," they look confused. It is imperative that we redefine the sides not as "pro-Israeli" vs. "pro-Palestinian," but rather, "pro-peace for both peoples" vs. "pro-war for both peoples."

One approach we use to decrease the polarization is to try to discuss our differences with people in a spirit of dialogue instead of debate. In practical terms, this means seeking out calm and friendly meetings with people who disagree with us. For example, after speaking on a Harvard radio talk show, along with a representative of the Jewish Community Relations Council, I met with the man over lunch. Later that month, he and his wife ate dinner at my house. While we do not yet agree about the best method to promote Middle East peace, our discussions are respectful, enabling both of us to listen more openly to the other's views. The Sister City Campaign believes we can be most effective not by *pushing* people into taking a stand, but by *pulling* them in, making them feel comfortable enough to take a stand.

Of course, it is not that easy. Recently a group of right-wing Zionists began actively campaigning to discredit and defame us. They attend and disrupt our public events; they write letters of protest to local businesses that support us; they wrote to the Cambridge Public Schools to insist that we be denied access. Most frightening, individual members of our Campaign have received hateful letters, and a local Jewish newspaper printed an editorial naming me, among others, as anti-Jewish. While we believe that this is a right-wing fringe of the Jewish community, the general public may not. The group may succeed, to an extent, in making people scared of us so that they will not get involved.

Another aspect of this cloud of  
*continued on page four*

## Looking for Funding?

Resist has often been a resource center for groups looking for funding. This year we published a small booklet entitled, "Finding Funding: A beginner's guide to foundation research." The booklet gives people an idea of how to get started, and includes a bibliography of important foundation and fundraising books, a list of Foundation Center Network Libraries, a sampling of large U.S. foundations and what they fund, and a list of the Funding Exchange Network of foundations. We were surprised that no simple guide like this existed, and happy that we had the time, energy, and financial resources to put one together. *For a copy, send \$1 to Resist, One Summer Street, Somerville, MA 02143.*

## Oops!

**Attention libraries:** The last issue of *Resist* (#227, June 1990) should have said "June/July" in the masthead. *Resist* is printed ten times a year, with two double issues in the summer. Because of this error, there will be no issue that says "July" on it in 1990. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.



The *Resist Newsletter* is published ten times a year by Resist, Inc., One Summer Street, Somerville, MA 02143. (617) 623-5110. The views expressed in articles, other than editorials, are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Resist staff or board.

Resist Staff: Nancy Wechsler  
Nancy Moniz  
Tatiana Schreiber

Typesetting: Wayne Curtis  
Gay Community News

Printing: Red Sun Press  
Printed on Recycled Paper



# Typewriters for Prisoners: A Collaborative Success

**TATIANA SCHREIBER and  
MIKE RIEGLE**

I don't remember exactly how this cumbersome idea for a Resist project was born. I do know that we seemed to be receiving an awful lot of grant requests to buy computers, printers, higher capacity computers, new software... and our grant applications were more and more often completed on computer. But a few applications still came in handwritten, particularly those from prisoners. It seemed obvious that there must be a lot of forsaken typewriters out there, (didn't I still have a electric Smith-Corona in my closet?) and at the same time, many prisoners trying to organize small projects were doing everything by hand.

One day we received a letter from a prisoner in Illinois, who was trying to organize a project that would provide paralegal help to other prisoners, and produce a newsletter exposing racism within the prison system. Among his needs was a typewriter. Several board members had typewriters at home that they were happy to donate. The next thing you know, someone suggested The Ad. We placed a very small ad in the Resist newsletter, asking people to imagine trying to organize without a typewriter or a computer. In no time we had a file folder full of letters describing typewriters. Here's the one we got from Cuyler W. Brooks, Jr., on a yellow page with the words "Beroaldus Cosmopolita Memorial Library & Typewriter Museum" at the top. "Dear Ohms," typed Mr. Brooks, "In the course of my obsession with typewriters I have cluttered the place up pretty well with the damn things. I can't bear to throw them away, but if somebody needs them, I have extras of some of the sturdy manual portables of the '50s and '60s - a Royal, an Olympia, a couple of Hermes 3000, all in the original cases..."

Since we didn't have expertise in sending packages to prisoners, we contacted Mike Riegle of the Prison Book Program and the *Gay Community News*

prison project. We asked if he'd be willing to review prisoner requests for typewriters, and figure out what rules and regs we'd have to follow to get them inside. I'll let Mike take over from here...

## Justice Moves More Slowly...

"Justice," one of the prisoners wrote, "moves more slowly, if it moves at all, when the motion is handwritten, rather than typed." We don't like to think of "justice" as depending on having a typewriter, but imagine being a judge and how much more favorably you'd look on a typed plea, especially in comparison with some poor handwriting. (Lack of education and job training are major aspects of people's being in prison.)

It's the nature of imprisonment to limit access, even to things almost everybody would agree should be accessible (like educational opportunities and job training). Myself, I go back and forth in my mind on how much of this inaccessibility is petty meanness and how much is really required by "security". Certainly, there would be more opportunities than there are if people on the outside took an interest in their criminal justice system's imprisonment business. And you learn much about human nature and our society from doing it. I have.



And so when Resist asked me to coordinate the project of distributing some typewriters they were collecting for prisoners, I was pleased, both about the typewriters going inside, and about Resist's public interest. Prisoner support is not a "fashionable" activity on the left these days. One of the prisoners who wrote explained that the typewriters had to come from a business organization. He suggested "The Resist Prisoner Typewriter Project"; something to show it came from

a "reputable" organization. The prisons don't often allow objects other than letters to come inside from individuals or political groups. They understand "business and money", but are suspicious of "support and friendship." (The Prison Book Program, for example, has to operate as if a part of the Red Book Store in Boston in order to send donated books in to prisoners. A brochure, funded by Resist, about how to do such a program, is available from: Prison Book Program, c/o Red Book Store, 92 Green St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.)

Outreach to prisoners announcing the availability of some typewriters was done through the Prisoner Resource list (also funded by Resist). It lists organizations, publications free to prisoners, and other useful resources; information you'd think any prison, sincerely interested in empowering a prisoner to get out and stay out, would make readily available.

Naturally, many more requests than typewriters were received. Choices had to be made. I came smack up against what must be a classic problem for organizations like Resist that want to primarily support (1) groups, as distinguished from individuals, doing (2) "political organizing," as distinguished from "social services." Sometimes this distinction is

## Threat to Security

(seems) clear; sometimes it is clearly not. Where would you place "filing a lawsuit against prison conditions in the AIDS ward"? Or, what about an individual (a Malcolm X, for example) typing (as required, practically) articles to circulate to local newspapers on the "politics of imprisonment"? (I'd like to see an issue of Resist on different people's feelings about the interplay of individual vs. groups, and "political organizing" vs. "social services".)

*continued on page seven*



controversy is that many people consider the Middle East solely a Jewish or Arab concern. At the Cambridge Women's Center last year, we organized what turned out to be an intense and fruitful discussion between Palestinian, Jewish and "other" women. We were disappointed, however, when a non-Semitic woman told us: "I was inspired hearing Palestinians and Jews speak openly to each other. Now I can stand back and let them work it out for themselves." Somehow we failed to make this woman aware of her integral role as a U.S. taxpayer.

Another challenge, and one especially suited for a sister city project, is to make real local-global connections. It's easy to do this rhetorically by pointing out how local needs are sacrificed for the sake of foreign aid. (U.S. tax dollars fund development projects throughout Israel, leaving more money available to the Israeli government to maintain the Occupation, yet development projects in our own country face drastic budget cuts.) Getting beyond the rhetoric, however, is difficult.

One reason for this is a level of racism that can exist for some activists involved in international peace work. Fighting for the rights of people in other countries often takes the place of fighting for the rights of people of color at home. At a recent educational event, a Latina woman from Roxbury, Massachusetts discussed similarities and differences between the occupied West Bank and her own community. A white woman responded with this realization: "It's easier to identify with Palestinians than with people of color locally. In the first case, we feel good about supporting those who are victimized by occupation; in the second case, we are shamed by our role as white oppressor."

Although the Sister City Campaign is proud that our membership is approximately one-third Arab, one-third Jewish, and one-third "other", there is a paucity of other people of color amongst our active supporters. We have not yet found meaningful ways to move beyond rhetoric to actually connect local and global issues in our program work. The Sister City Campaign, however, as a framework that is both local and international, holds great potential to bridge this gap and contribute to a parallel process of domestic and international change. To do this, we must take on the difficult (and for the most part unprecedented) task of creating a program that addresses the issues of Ramallah/El-

Bireh and those of our own community. In addressing racism we must fight racism against people of color in the U.S.; anti-Arab racism that underlies local discrimination as well as unjust foreign policy; and anti-Jewish racism.

## The Strategy

Sister cities are generally accepted as non-controversial ways to promote positive people-to-people relationships with foreign communities. We took advantage of this mainstream idea and

Ramallah/El-Bireh. Once we link ten or twenty groups in meaningful, on-going relationships, we will ask Cambridge City Council to recognize that we have already created a sister city relationship.

This approach has turned out to be harder than we expected. Many people must overcome deep prejudices before they can be convinced even to correspond with a Palestinian. They need education and inspiration to perceive such a relationship as worthwhile. Organizations find it hard to come to an agreement about

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applied it to a difficult region in order to be as non-threatening as possible. However, when activists in Berkeley, California tried to establish a sister city with Jabalia Refugee Camp, they found the City Council divided. They sought community support through a referendum, and a divisive and expensive battle ensued. This sister city initiative was defeated.

In Cambridge, in November, 1988, a non-binding referendum on the Middle East passed. It called for Israeli respect for Palestinian human rights, U.S. support for a Palestinian state alongside Israel, and an end to the use of U.S. tax dollars to support the occupation. While the referendum campaign succeeded in showing majority support for Palestinian rights, it also had some adverse effects on the local atmosphere. Some Jewish organizations considered the referendum destructive and the wider Boston community was polarized.

The Cambridge-Ramallah/El-Bireh Sister City Campaign learned from these two efforts and decided that instead of placing a high value on an official Cambridge City Council resolution, we would concentrate instead on winning community support and building community involvement. Our plan is to link local kindergartens, unions, businesses, and community groups with their Palestinian counterparts in

a formal organizational link. And last, but not least, correspondence is slow, unreliable, and dangerous for the Palestinians. Still, we have continued with this approach. Having recently hired a West Bank Palestinian to coordinate the Ramallah/El-Bireh aspect of the Campaign, we feel confident that soon the correspondence will work more smoothly and consistently.

The power of this correspondence was clear in a recent exchange of letters by two 12-year old girls. The Cambridge student wrote: "Dear Friend, I have blond hair. My father is an actor and I want to be one too...." The Palestinian answered: "Dear Friend, I have green eyes. My father is a teacher but he is in prison.... I want to live in peace without throwing stones...."

In addition to correspondence, we promote appreciation of Palestinian culture and viewpoints through educational and cultural events. Many people think of Palestinians only as adversaries of Israel, not as fathers, cooks, poets, sisters, boyfriends, gardeners or musicians. To expand people's understanding of Palestinians, we marched in the Cambridge River Festival parade in traditional Palestinian dress, carrying balloons saying "Celebrate Palestinian Culture." We exhibit traditional embroidery and children's artwork in the community. We offer lessons in colloquial Arabic, teach people to cook Arabic food, and sponsor Pales-



tinian folkdance performances.

We invite visiting Palestinians to speak directly with local people — like Amal Aruri (women's rights activist and wife of an expelled physicist), and physician Mazen Rantisi. We are not trying to propagate particular Palestinian views (and, of course, there are many different Palestinian viewpoints) as much as fighting for the right of Palestinians to be heard and respected.

### Nothing more complicated than human beings...

Taking local groups to the West Bank is perhaps the most powerful way to humanize the image of Palestinians. At a community forum at Temple Beth Shalom, a returned delegate said: "Some people criticize me for stressing the human aspects, saying that it overly simplifies a very politically complex situation. But since travelling to the West Bank, I realize that taking the human view is not to simplify, but rather to complicate matters. Nothing is more complicated than human beings.

Some of the more personally important connections happen unexpectedly. I went to visit a friend in a village near Ramallah, but he had gone looking for me elsewhere. While I waited for him, his sisters and I took part in a spontaneous cultural exchange — they taught me how to belly dance and I taught them how to rock and roll. Another Sister City Campaign member told me that she felt closest to a visiting Palestinian woman the day they put the political discussions aside and spent the morning getting their hair done at a beauty salon. These interactions are not apolitical. Sharing daily experiences and talking directly with Palestinians — who are silenced by our government and demonized by our media — are political acts.

On another occasion, I accompanied a Palestinian friend as he drove from his home in Na'ileen Village to Ramallah. He casually pointed out the features on the new Israeli-built road we traveled on. At first I didn't notice anything special, until he showed me that the new highway bypassed the Palestinian villages on either side. There are no on or off ramps, so that those villages, formerly linked by the old road, are now cut off.

People who learn about the dehumanizing and painful realities of the Occupation without having some way to contribute to peace, feel disempowered and may withdraw. Moreover, widespread support for Middle East peace won't mean



Diane Hitti (left, front) with her host family in Kadura refugee camp; Dec., 1989.  
Photo: Nora Lestor.

much unless we mobilize to demand that our representatives alter U.S. foreign policy. Therefore, the Sister City Campaign does not limit itself to education, but moves to the next phase of mobilization. We provide opportunities for people to get involved in making a difference, whether by writing to a Palestinian pen pal, raising money for a clinic or day care center, sending telegrams urging the release of a political prisoner, lobbying for changed U.S. foreign policy, or whatever interests them. Our experience has shown that low-level interest can develop into high-level commitment once friendships have been established.

Without a doubt, the most exciting aspect of the Campaign is our relationship with the people of Ramallah/El-Bireh, and the surrounding villages and refugee camps. On one level, the sister city relationship means different things to them than it does to us. For the Palestinians, the most important goal is not education, but political and financial support. They are less concerned about stereotypes and more concerned about U.S. policy. On another level, though, there is much that is common to both agendas. For example, we need accurate and up-to-date information; they can provide it. They need access to the U.S. media and public; we can, to a certain extent, provide it.

Most importantly, the sister city relationship with the Ramallah/El-Bireh area allows us to implement an alternative Cambridge foreign policy based on respect for human rights and peace. In this way,

the people of Cambridge can reclaim our right to determine the nature of U.S. foreign policy. Our sister city relationship is not merely a means to an end, but a valuable end in and of itself.

Despite the difficulties and challenges that we still must overcome, the Sister City Campaign remains the most exciting and auspicious Middle East peace project that I have been involved with. We hope to send U.S. students and professionals to Ramallah/El-Bireh to document the history and culture of villages. We hope to sponsor a moving exhibit of contemporary Palestinian artwork. We hope to expand exchanges of letters, artwork, videos, etc. between local groups and their Palestinian counterparts. We hope to provide some support for the economy of the West Bank by facilitating trade relations between U.S. importers and Palestinian cooperatives. In this way, we are contributing to the building of a Palestinian society that is stable, independent and secure. □

*Nora Lestor works part-time as coordinator of the Cambridge-Ramallah/El Bireh Sister City Campaign. For more information, call or write: Cambridge-Ramallah/El-Bireh Sister City Campaign, 11 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138; (617) 492-4934. Editor's Note: We are interested in articles about other sister city relationships for the Resist Newsletter. We would like to know about the rewards, conflicts, controversies and adventures involved in establishing these relationships, particularly in areas other than Central America. Please contact Tatiana Schreiber at Resist.*



## Movement Moves

### Guatemala Conference Exceeds Expectations

The Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA) staged a major strategy planning conference June 9-10, with support from Resist. The Washington, D.C. conference, entitled "Guatemala in the '90s: The Struggle for Democracy in a Country at War," drew over 500 attendees, though organizers had planned for only half that number. "The success however was not just quantitative," organizers wrote in a recent letter to Resist. "Rigoberta Menchu, an indigenous Guatemalan leader called the conference 'historic'. Both Guatemalan and Northamerican participants and presenters felt that the conference represented an important boost to the struggle of the Guatemalan people and to the solidarity movement in the U.S.

"Resist's grant paid for a significant portion of our printing costs, most particularly for the conference brochure. In a very direct way, this brochure contributed to the success of the conference and was an important element in drawing the large response to the conference.... The conference took advantage of the presence of the Guatemalan popular movement representatives to arrange activities for them outside of the conference. This included meetings with human rights groups, religious groups, labor unions, a special lunch meeting in the Senate sponsored by Senators Harkin, Mikulski and Hatfield and a meeting with former President Jimmy Carter in Atlanta...."

According to an account of the conference in *The Guardian* (June 27), workshops concentrated on labor issues and legislative strategies to cut off all U.S.

military aid to Guatemala, and to end commercial arms sales. Rigoberta Menchu called on conference participants to join the Guatemalan popular movement in demanding an end to the militarization of the countryside, and dissolution of the Civil Patrols, "an insidious program that...makes all rural men servants of the army," the article concluded.

### Gays and Lesbians Win Rights Law in Pittsburgh

We can hardly take credit for this one, but we did give an emergency grant in 1988 to the Pittsburgh March Committee for expenses of organizing around an amendment to the City Code that would add lesbians and gays to other groups protected against discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations. Legislation was introduced in 1988, but failed that year in a 4-4 vote. In 1989, according to the May, 1990 issue of *The Gay People's Chronicle*, Pittsburgh gay organizations held a series of demonstrations aimed at council members and Mayor Sophie Masloff, who had lobbied against the bill in closed door meetings, while publicly supporting the measure.

In their emergency grant request, the March Committee wrote: "More than 80 individuals and organizational representatives testified in support of the proposal while only 30 testified in opposition.... The anger and passion of our community has sent the clear message to our city officials that we will not accept anything less than equity.... This effort has shaped our community into something bold and new. Pittsburgh will never be the same!!"

This year, the vote was 6 for, 2

against, and 1 abstention, assuring that the amendment will become law. Pittsburgh joins Philadelphia and Harrisburg as Pennsylvania cities which have legislation protecting lesbians and gay men. Sexual orientation has now been added to Title VI of the City Code which already protects against discrimination based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, handicap, disability or use of a guide dog.

### No New Nukes in Idaho

The summer issue of *Nukewatch Pathfinder* reports a victory for the Snake River Alliance (a Resist grantee) and other peace and environmental groups. The U.S. Department of Energy has scrapped plans for a nuclear bomb factory in the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory in the Eastern Idaho desert, above the Snake River aquifer. The project, which would have employed a newly developed technology for plutonium production, is the first nuclear weapons production plant to be canceled since World War II. Of course, victories don't mean the battle is over. The article says the DOE is seeking \$363-million for its New Production Reactor program to construct two plutonium/tritium reactors (one in Idaho), to replace older facilities in South Carolina and Washington.

### Solidarity Brigade for Abortion Rights

The *Central America Update* of the Portland Central America Solidarity Committee (PCASC), a past Resist grantee, reports that several groups are organizing to protect women using abortion and other services of local women's health and family planning clinics. Members of the Ben Linder Construction Brigade, the Portland-Corinto Sister City Association (also a Resist grantee), and PCASC are involved in the project. "We want to bond with other social justice movements, and we intend to show our support - in a concrete way - for a woman's right to act on her own religious and secular views on abortion and reproduction," the coalition stated. □

*Send us your news! We'd like to include in this occasional column short pieces about movement successes, new coalitions, conference reports, or issues you are working on that other activists ought to pay attention to.*

### Join the Resist Pledge Program

We'd like you to consider becoming a Resist Pledge. Pledges account for over 25% of our income. By becoming a pledge, you help guarantee Resist a fixed and dependable source of income on which we can build our grant making program. In return, we will send you a monthly pledge letter and reminder, along with your newsletter. We will keep you up-to-date on the groups we have funded, and the other work being done at Resist. So take the plunge and become a Resist Pledge! We count on you, and the groups we fund count on us.

☐ **Yes! I would like to become a Resist Pledge. I'd like to pledge \$\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ (monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, 2x a year, yearly).**

☐ **Enclosed is my pledge contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_.**

☐ **I can't join the pledge program just now, but here's a contribution to support your work. \$\_\_\_\_\_**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Resist

One Summer Street, Somerville, MA 02143 • (617) 623-5110



Well, so far, eleven machines have been sent out, all over the country. One will be used to help publish a newsletter in the Framingham, Mass. women's prison; one to litigate on behalf of prisoners with AIDS who are being denied privileges afforded other prisoners; several will be used to "fight for constitutional rights and against the degradation of prisoners as a class of people": actively by the prison authorities, and passively by the indifference of those of us outside who "just don't want to hear about it." Here too, I've gone back and forth in my mind between believing our indifference is a petty meanness or self-righteousness, and believing it's just a lack of consciousness about how the justice business really works and/or a sense of hopelessness about changing it.

Debra Voelker, of the Loyola Death Penalty Resource Center, asked us for a machine for a death row prisoner at Angola, Louisiana. "As I'm sure you know," she said, "one of the biggest problems for imprisoned people is the loneliness and isolation that they feel, the sense of hopelessness. This is particularly true for death-sentenced individuals, especially those incarcerated at facilities that are difficult to visit, such as Angola. This sense of despair is, I think, a major factor in some Death Row prisoners becoming "volunteers", i.e., refusing to exercise their appeal processes, hence allowing the state to execute them. You can imagine the "ripple effect" this has on other death-sentenced people and the system feels as if it's won one. It is my hope that each prisoner, and indeed each human, find a reason and purpose for their life. One of the resources on your list, and a typewriter which could provide the self-esteem to contact it with, could well be a step in the direction of regaining some hope. Many thanks again."

### With a Little Help From Our Friends...

This is Tatiana again: The typewriter project would never have gotten off the ground but for the generosity of typewriter mavens Ed Vandewalle, Teddy Vandewalle, and Tom Furrier. We were looking around for a typewriter company that would be willing to clean and repair the typewriters, package them, and mail them to prisoners, according to whatever specifications each institution required, all for a reasonable fee. We thought of Cambridge Typewriter because Resist, GCN, and the Prison Book Program had each worked with them in the past, and known them to be helpful, friendly and expert in the field

of typewriter repair.

Mike called Ed Vandewalle, owner of the business (Ed recently retired after 22 years) and he said "sure, no problem." Once Mike had screened our typewriter requests and decided where each donated machine should be sent, one of us from Resist brought the typewriters to the shop. Ed or his son Teddy, who has worked there fifteen years, or eleven year employee Tom Furrier, would clean, oil, and repair the machine, give it a new ribbon, and ship it off with a letter from Resist, all for \$50.00. Tom says the electric typewriters sometimes required quite a bit of work, while the manuals usually had few problems. That's an important point, since many prisoners are only allowed manuals anyway.

"Many people wouldn't want to bother with something like this," I said to Tom, "so why did you do it?" "Well, we're big on typewriter repairs and we've always been a service-oriented company." Tom and Teddy are now running Cambridge Typewriter together. Tom said the prisoner project was a business deal as well as a service, but I can't see that it's going to make the guys rich, so if you live in the Boston area and want to support Cambridge Typewriter, their new address is: Cambridge Typewriter, 102 Mass. Ave., Arlington, MA 02174.

What with so many people switching to computers, Tom and Teddy are a bit worried about the future. "We saw the handwriting on the wall about four years ago, when electronic typewriters became popular," said Tom. "They don't break down very much." But, they're getting into repairing fax machines, so maybe there's still hope. "I still love fixing typewriters," concluded Tom. "It's always something different." Well, we're going to continue the Resist Prisoner Typewriter Project over the next six months or so, so we'll keep him busy. If you live in the Boston area and have a typewriter to donate, please write to us describing the machine. Obviously smaller, more portable machines are preferred, and it seems manuals are more likely to be permitted into the prisons. We don't have storage space here, so please be patient with the process. Once you've contacted us, we'll be in touch when we're ready to receive the machine.

We can make arrangements to pick up machines in the Boston area (though we prefer if you can bring it in). For those of you who live outside of our area, we can still accept your donation if you are able to assume the cost of shipping it to us.

Thanks so much to everyone who has supported this project, and thanks to all the prisoners who waited for typewriters while we worked out all the details. Best wishes with your all your work, and keep on typing! (Or computing, or whatever...By the way, we still *do* accept grant proposals that are handwritten if you don't have access to a machine; just please try to write clearly, and darkly enough for photocopying. Thanks!) □

*Tatiana Schreiber is the newsletter editor at Resist, and a member of the Resist board. Mike Riegle coordinates the Prison Project at Gay Community News, and the Prison Book Program at the Red Book Store. If you are interested in working with either project, call Mike at (617) 426-4469.*

## Grants

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many additional young people signed up for the next clinic.

The Bike Project will teach bike repair skills and will sell donated bikes at nominal cost. (Some will be given away to children who otherwise could not afford a bike, and some will be donated to projects in Latin America). CAMILA will provide overall direction, organization, and administration, but it is hoped that the youth will take over running the bike clinic and that it will become self-sufficient. Parents and siblings will be encouraged to participate as well. In addition to learning bike repair and how to manage a business, CAMILA sees the project as a way for young people to develop critical thinking and organizing skills that will aid them in decision-making and activism around the socioeconomic, political and cultural struggles of the community.

As part of the Bike Project, CAMILA plans workshops with other community groups on issues such as the relationship between life in Chicano barrios in the U.S. and that in Latin America, and the history of Chicano groups in the Southwest and the U.S. Some of the community issues that CAMILA and sister organization United East Austin are working on together include PCB and other toxic contamination, multicultural issues in the schools, and violence and exploitation related to youth gangs.

Resist's support will be used to rent office space for the project.



*In the last few issues of Resist, we have been grouping our grant reports according to theme (Central American refugee groups, community organizing, lesbian and gay), but that system leaves out some groups doing important and often unique work. In this issue we are highlighting two such groups that received grants at our June board meeting. For more information, write them at the addresses provided.*

**Men Overcoming Violence (MOVE),** 3004 16th St., No. 112, San Francisco, CA 94103.

MOVE has been engaged in community organizing and training around the issue of male violence since 1980. A primarily male group, MOVE's goal is to empathically reach out to other men to encourage the unlearning of coercive, demanding and abusive behavior. MOVE provides counseling services for men who batter, and in 1986 initiated the first program in the country offering services to gay men who batter.

The main principle governing MOVE's work is that most men abuse others as a result of a socialization process, not because of inherent traits or psychological disorders: "Our work highlights how this socially constructed and enforced dynamic essentially sets men up to respond to emotional pain and relational conflict (among other things) with force and intimidation. We believe that boys and men have been systematically terrorized in the service of masculinity, then silenced and isolated in their pain. It is therefore no surprise that boys grow up to be terrorists themselves."

This analysis allows the organization to confront both personal violent behavior, and the social forces which promote and reward male violence against women. MOVE regularly provides speakers for schools, colleges, conferences, media, mental health agencies and jails concerning male violence and gender role socialization. Included in the workshops are issues of class, race and homophobia, helping men see how these are related and how they affect all men.

Direct services include five counseling groups a week for straight men, and one group for gay and bisexual men. These groups are available for a sliding fee down to \$1.00.

In July, MOVE presented a workshop at the Third International Lesbian and Gay Health Conference entitled "Organizing

Domestic Violence Offender Services for Gay and Bisexual Men Who Batter." Struggling against the community's denial of gay male battering, the group has done concerted work in the last four years with gay men and their mental health providers addressing violence in their lives and relationships. Resist's recent grant went to assist MOVE with a new package of educational and outreach literature for the Gay Domestic Violence Program. The organization has followed a two-stage education/outreach process. The first stage involved very emotional and graphically confrontive materials, designed to attract attention and establish that violence within this community was present, ongoing, but nonetheless a problem which could be addressed.

The group believes this campaign has successfully broken the silence that surrounded the issue in the San Francisco area. Now, however, they want to go beyond that stage, and begin healing/recovery of the community and individual abusers. The new materials contain a more complete explanation of the dynamics of abuse within relationships, and includes examples of clearly defined behavior changes which can be used to immediately break the cycle of violence. Critical to the new materials is a more empathic voice, one which says "We know what it feels like to have been abusive, and we're here to help you as you struggle with change."

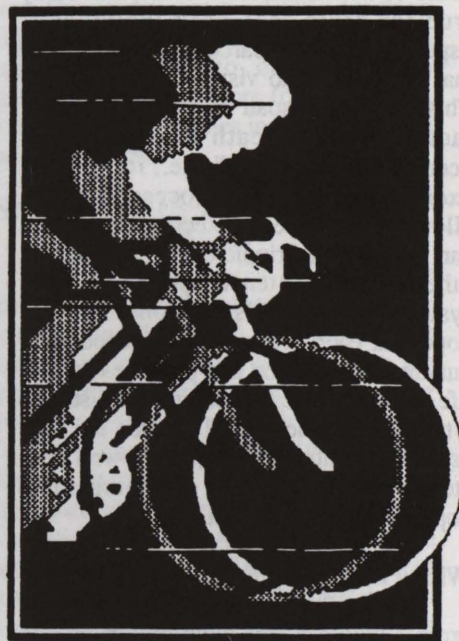
**Chicanos Against Military Intervention in Latin America (CAMILA),** 1704 E. 5th St. #105, Austin, Texas 78702.

CAMILA formed in 1986 in response to U.S. policy toward Nicaragua, organizing a statewide Chicano coalition to protest U.S. intervention in Latin America. The founding events also commemorated the sixteenth anniversary of the Chicano Moratorium Against the War in Vietnam, held in East Los Angeles in 1970. CAMILA works to expose the links between wars of intervention, lack of resources in barrios at home, and the use of "Chicanos and other people of color as cannon fodder." Though predominantly Chicano, the group also includes Salvadorans, Puerto Ricans, and Northamericans.

The group has had annual marches and rallies protesting events in Latin America, most recently the murder of the six Jesuit priests and two women in El Salvador. Other projects have included a statewide school supply drive which

provided a Nicaraguan elementary school with supplies for a year, and participation on the national coordinating committee of the Veterans Peace Convoy to Nicaragua. CAMILA operates a speakers bureau to provide information on intervention and local issues of poverty and civil rights.

In the last year, however, the group has decided to refocus its efforts on grassroots organizing, in order to educate and empower its own community. CAMILA is particularly concerned about several issues: that war in Latin America may be the impetus to re-enact a Selective Service, and that poor, minority youth have few opportunities to escape poverty other than the armed forces; that there are very few jobs available to Latino youth, and among Austin Latinos there is a secondary school drop-out rate of 34% - circumstances that perpetuate a ready pool for military conscription and dependence; and that Latino youth are turning to drugs not only as an escape from boredom and dead end prospects, but as an employment alternative.



In response to these concerns, the group is working with the Austin Chapter of Bikes Not Bombs to create the East Austin Youth Bike Project. The idea emerged from a very successful one day bike clinic for barrio youth. Thirty-one youngsters brought their bikes and cooperatively got them repaired; 15 bikes were donated by community people; 4 teens volunteered to assist as repairers/teachers at the next clinic; and

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